



INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY AND WATER COMMISSION
UNITED STATES AND MEXICO
UNITED STATES SECTION

For immediate release
July 27, 2006

RIO GRANDE WATER QUALITY, BINATIONAL RIO GRANDE
SUMMIT, SAVE THE VALLEY CIVIC ASSOCIATION ON
AGENDA FOR AUGUST 9 PUBLIC MEETING IN EL PASO

Water quality in the upper Rio Grande in Texas will be discussed at the next meeting of the Rio Grande Citizens' Forum of the United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC). The meeting will take place August 9, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. at the USIBWC Headquarters, 4171 N. Mesa, Building C, El Paso, TX.

Nancy Hanks, USIBWC Environmental Protection Specialist and Clean Rivers Program (CRP) Quality Assurance Officer, along with Cory Horan, CRP Project Manager from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, will give a presentation entitled "How's the Water?" The CRP, in conjunction with USIBWC, sponsors routine monitoring and special studies along the Rio Grande by partnering with other local entities such as El Paso Community College, El Paso Water Utilities, and the University of Texas at El Paso. "How's the Water?" will provide updated information on the water quality at more than 20 sites along the Upper Rio Grande in Texas, which sees high levels of bacteria, chloride, sulfate, total dissolved solids, ammonia, and phosphorus. Dr. Hanks will present recent routine and special studies' monitoring results as well as details on the upcoming statewide Texas Clean Rivers Program stakeholders meeting in Austin.

Also on the agenda, Acting Secretary Sally Spener of the USIBWC will present a report on the follow-up to the Binational Rio Grande Summit, held in late 2005. The objective of the Summit was to

convene experts and water users from throughout the basin to develop recommendations for consideration by the Governments of the United States and Mexico related to sustainable management of the basin. Participants included representatives from local, state, and federal government, academics, environmental organizations, municipal water utilities, farmers, and irrigation districts from both countries. The recommendations, which resulted from two days of presentations and discussion, are focused on four broad conference themes: Legal and Institutional Aspects, Binational Basin Management, Environment and Water Quality, and Finance.

In other business, Citizens' Forum Board Member Alisa Jorgensen, who is also a Board Member of the Save the Valley Civic Association, will give a presentation on the history and accomplishments of Save the Valley, a registered neighborhood association with the City of El Paso that advocates for responsible development in the Upper Valley. Land use, open space, and water availability are of primary importance to Save the Valley. Ms. Jorgensen will show a short documentary of the group's history and present issues of concern to residents of the Upper Valley.

The Rio Grande Citizens' Forum was established by the USIBWC in 1999 to facilitate the exchange of information regarding Commission activities on the Rio Grande between Percha Dam, New Mexico and Fort Quitman, Texas. It is designed to bring together community members, enabling the early and continued two-way flow of information, concerns, values, and needs between USIBWC and the general public, environmentalists, irrigation districts, municipalities, and others interested in the river. Members of the Rio Grande Citizens' Forum Board, who serve as unpaid volunteers, represent a variety of interests along the Rio Grande in west Texas and southern New Mexico.

The meeting agenda is attached. Members of the public can obtain more information from Public Affairs Assistant Selma Rivera at 915-832-4706, selmarivera@ibwc.state.gov.

News media may contact:

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RIO GRANDE CITIZENS' FORUM

Wednesday, August 9, 2006

6:30 - 8:30 P.M.

International Boundary and Water Commission
4171 N. Mesa Street, The Commons, Building C
(just south of Executive Center Boulevard)
El Paso, TX

Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions - Ken Rakestraw, Citizens' Forum Co-Chair
- How's the Water? - Nancy Hanks, Environmental Protection Specialist and Clean Rivers Program (CRP) Quality Assurance Officer, USIBWC, and Cory Horan, CRP Project Manager, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
- Save the Valley Civic Association - Alisa Jorgensen, Board Member
- Binational Rio Grande Summit - Sally Spener, Acting Secretary, USIBWC
- Public Comment
- Board Discussion, Suggested Future Agenda Items

If you have a disability that you wish to self-identify confidentially that requires accommodation, please advise us ahead of time.

For more information, call 915-832-4706 or e-mail selmarivera@ibwc.state.gov.
